

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 LISBON 3847

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: CDR, CRT, AND WORKERS' COMMISSION

REF: (A) STATE 148279 (B) LISBON 3425

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL'S ESPOUSAL OF DIRECT LINKS BETWEEN AFM AND PEOPLE HAS LEFT UNANSWERED QUESTION OF HOW THIS MIGHT BEST BE ACCOMPLISHED. PRINCIPAL ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACHES BEING CONSIDERED ARE BASED UPON:

(1) REVOLUTIONARY COUNCILS OF WORKERS, SOLDIERS, AND SEAMEN (CRT'S), BACKED BY FAR LEFT; AND (2) COMMITTEES FOR DEFENSE OF REVOLUTION (CDR'S), SUPPORTED BY COMMUNISTS. NEITHER CONCEPT HAS WIDE PUBLIC SUPPORT. NEITHER CDR'S NOR CRT'S HAS STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL BASE. CRT ORGANIZERS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO MOVE TOO FAR TOO FAST. AS A RESULT CRT'S ARE ALMOST OUT OF CONTENTION FOR OFFICIAL SUPPORT. CDR BACKERS

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HAVE FOLLOWED MORE DELIBERATE COURSE. DESPITE FACT THAT CDR'S

REMAIN LARGELY A PAPER ORGANIZATION, THEY ARE STILL IN THE RUNNING IN TERMS OF AFM PREFERENCES FOR AN ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL TO FOLLOW IN ESTABLISHING DIRECT LINKS WITH PEOPLE. WORKERS' COMMISSIONS ARE NOT FORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH EITHER CRT'S OR CDR'S. THOSE ON FAR LEFT, HOWEVER, TEND TO BE SOMEWHAT MORE VOCAL IN THEIR CUPPORT OF COMMISSIONS THAN DO COMMUNISTS. AFM ENDORSES ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSIONS. OTHER "POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS," E.G. TENANTS COMMISSIONS, COULD ALSO SERVE AFM DESIRES FOR ITS "LINKS WITH THE PEOPLE."
END SUMMARY

1. COMMITTEES FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE REVOLUTION (CDR):

A. IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION: CDR IS AN ORGANIZATIONAL CONCEPT CAPABLE OF REINFORCING THE IDEOLOGY OF WHOEVER EMPLOYS IT. FROM STANDPOINT OF RC, PRINCIPAL ATTRACTION OF CDR WOULD BE ABILITY TO BYPASS POLITICAL PARTIES WITHOUT ADOPTING IDEOLOGICAL BAGGAGE WHICH NECESSARILY ACCOMPANIES CRT STRUCTURE.

B. BACKGROUND: CDR'S CAME TO PUBLIC ATTENTION FOLLOWING REPORTS THAT MAY 19 AFM ASSEMBLY WOULD CONSIDER CDR AND CRT CONCEPTS AS ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS FOR LARGE-SCALE ORGANIZATION OF "MASSES." MAY 26 AFM ASSEMBLY ENDORSED CDR CONCEPT "IN PRINCIPLE" BUT FORWARDED ENTIRE MATTER TO MILITARY WORKING GROUP FOR FULLER DEVELOPMENT. WORKING GROUP IS REPORTEDLY FINISHED OR ON THE VERGE OF FINISHING ITS STUDY. CDR IS LITTLE MORE THAN AN IDEA IN THE MINDS OF ITS BACKERS. ORIGINAL CDR IS ORGANIZATION WHICH ORIGINATED AND FLOURISHES IN CUBA, WHERE SUCH COMMITTEES ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE. THE LIKELY VEHICLE FOR TRANSFERRING CONCEPT TO PORTUGAL WAS THE VARELA GOMES MILITARY MISSION TO CUBA IN LATE APRIL OF THIS YEAR. THE FIRST CDR, COMPOSED OF STAGE HANDS AT A LISBON THEATER, MADE ITS DEBUT ON JUNE 1. SINCE THEN, FORMATION OF CDR'S HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED AT SOREFAME (TRAIN FACTORY NEAR LISBON); FISPE-FIBRAS SINTETICAS DE PORTUGAL IN MARINHA GRANDE; NEWSPAPER O SEculo; AND AT A BRANCH OF THE FERNANDES MAGALHAES BANK IN LISBON. OTHER CDR'S HAVE BEEN FORMED BUT SOLID INFORMATION IS LACKING.

C. ORGANIZATION: IMPLEMENTATION OF CDR PROPOSAL WOULD CREAT A TRIPARTITE GOVERNING STRUCTURE IN PORTUGAL. BESIDES THE EXISTING CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZED VERTICALLY FROM CONFIDENTIAL

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MUNICIPAL COUNCILS TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, AND THE AFM STRUCTURE EXTENDING FROM AFM REPRESENTATIVES IN LOCAL MILITARY UNITS, TO REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL A THIRD ORGANIZATION, THE CDR, WOULD BE CREATED. ITS BASE WOULD BE THE INDIVIDUAL CDR, ORGANIZED IN A NEIGHBORHOOD, FACTORY, OR OFFICE. THE STRUCTURE WOULD THEN PYRAMID TO THE PARISH ASSEMBLY, THE REGIONAL POPULAR ASSEMBLY, THE DISTRICT POPULAR ASSEMBLY, CULMINATING IN A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PEOPLE. THE CDR

CONCEPT ENVISAGES BROAD INTERPENETRATION, AT EACH CORRESPONDING LEVEL, OF THE THREE PARALLEL STRUCTURES.

AS SET FORTH IN THE PROPOSAL MADE TO THE MAY 26 AFM ASSEMBLY, DEFENSE OF THE REVOLUTION WOULD NOT BE THE ONLY OR EVEN THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF CDR'S. MANY ACTIVITIES NOW HANDLED BY FIFTH DIVISION'S DYNAMIZATION AND CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS COULD BE TRANSFERRED TO IT. FIFTH DIVISION WOULD LIKELY OVERSEE CDR'S.

D. EFFECTIVENESS: CDR'S ARE STILL LITTLE MORE THAN PAPER ORGANIZATIONS. IT IS PREMATURE THEREFORE TO JUDGE EFFECTIVENESS.

E. LINKS TO POLITICAL PARTIES:
ON JUNE 13, COMMUNIST PARTY CAUTIOUSLY ANNOUNCED ITS SUPPORT FOR CDR'S AS A DESIRABLE ELEMENT WITHIN A BROADER POLITICAL STRUCTURE. MDP/CDE FOLLOWED SUIT ON JUNE 16 IN VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL TERMS AND HAS NOW BECOME CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH CDR'S. EXCEPT FOR MDP/CDE, NONE OF OTHER LEFT ORGANIZATIONS HAS COME OUT IN FAVOR OF CDR'S. THE PRP-BR CHIEF SPONSOR OF RIVAL CRT'S, DISMISSES CDR'S AS PUPPET ORGANIZATIONS MANIPULATED BY COMMUNIST PARTY. THE LEFT SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (MES) HAS REJECTED BOTH ORGANIZATIONS AS "PREMATURE."

F. LEADERSHIP: NO PROMINENT INDIVIDUALS HAVE PUBLICALLY ENDORSED CDR'S. COL VARELA GOMES AND CAPT RAMIRO CORREIA ARE BELIEVED TO BE BEHIND-THE-SCENES SUPPORTERS WITHIN AFM.

G. CURRENT POLITICAL ROLE: LIKE CRT'S, CDR'S MAIN POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE DERIVES NOT FROM ACTUAL STRENGTH BUT RATHER FROM POSSIBILITY THAT CDR CONCEPT MIGHT BE ADOPTED FORMALLY BY AFM AS MODEL FOR BUILDING DIRECT LINKS TO PEOPLE.

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H. POLITICAL PROSPECT: PROSPECTS OF CDR'S ARE LINKED DIRECTLY TO AFM SUPPORT. IF CURRENT AFM ASSEMBLY ENDORSES CDR CONCEPT ITS "UNITARY" NON-PARTY CHARACTER NOTWITHSTANDING, PARTIES WILL SEEK TO ORGANIZE AND CONTROL CDR'S OR FAILING THIS TO ENSURE THAT PARTY MILITANTS ARE IN KEY POSITIONS.

2. REVOLUTIONARY COUNCILS OF WORKERS (CRT):

A. IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION: CRT IS MARXIST-BASED AND ADVOCATES IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT OF "DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT" AT A TIME WHEN EVEN THE PCP HAS DROPPED THIS LINE. THIS CONCEPT IS LITERALLY THE FOCUS OF ENTIRE CRT IDEOLOGY. CRT LABELS ITSELF AS UNITARY, NON-PARTY ARMED ORGANIZATION.

B. BACKGROUND: CRT CONCEPT IS LINEAL DESCENDANT OF INTER-COMPANY COMMITTEE (ICC) FORMED SOON AFTER APRIL 25 COUP. SIGNIFICANT DATES IN CRT DEVELOPMENT ARE:

(1) FEB. 7, 1975 -- LARGE "ANTI-FASCIST" DEMONSTRATION
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IN LISBON SPONSORED BY ICC.

- (2) APRIL 11 -- FIRST CRT PLENARY SESSION IN LISBON.
- (3) APRIL 19 -- FIRST CONGRESS, HELD IN MARINHA GRANDE.
- (4) MAY 1 -- CRT SPONSORED "UNITARY DEMONSTRATION" ATTENDED BY SEVERAL THOUSAND, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF LATIN AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS.
- (5) MAY 7 -- SECOND CONGRESS.
- (6) MAY 16 -- AFM ASSEMBLY SCHEDULED TO CONSIDER ADOPTION OF PROGRAM FOR "ORGANIZATION OF MASSES," CRT CONCEPT COMPETING AGAINST CDR. DEBATE POSTPONED.
- (7) MAY 20 -- COPCON COMMANDER GENERAL OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO PRAISED CRT'S.
- (8) MAY 26 -- AFM ASSEMBLY REJECTED CRT CONCEPT; LEANED TOWARDS CDR'S.
- (9) JUNE 15 -- CRT MILITANTS VISITED LISBON RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS, DEMANDED THAT STATIONS BROADCAST WARNING OF POLITICAL CRISIS TO PEOPLE. STATIONS COMPLIED.
- (10) JUNE 17 -- SUBSTANTIAL CRT DEMONSTRATION, CALLING FOR

"PROLETARIAN POWER," MARCHED THROUGH LISBON. REACHING S. BENTO, CROWD CALLED OUT UNSUCCESSFULLY FOR "COMRADE OTELO."

(11) JUNE 19 -- REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL PUBLICLY REPUDIATED "DICTATORSHIP OF PROLETARIAT WITH ARMED MILITIA SUPPORT" AS PATH TO SOCIALISM. COPCON STATEMENT ATTACKED "REACTIONARY AND OPPORTUNIST" ACTIONS BY "LEFTIST POLITICAL GROUPS WEAKLY IMPLANTED ON NATIONAL LEVEL."

C. ORGANIZATION: BASIC CRT UNIT IS INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL IN FACTORY, MILITARY UNIT, OR FARM. LEADERS OF EACH UNIT ARE "ELECTED" IN POPULAR ASSEMBLIES. POPULAR ASSEMBLIES HAVE POWER TO REPLACE LEADERS AT ANY TIME. FROM THIS BASE, CRT ORGANIZATION IS PYRAMIDAL, WITH INDIVIDUAL CRT'S GROUPED INTO REGIONAL COUNCILS, WHICH IN TURN ARE GROUPED INTO ONE OF TWO ZONAL COUNCILS. NATIONAL SECRETARIAT SUPERVISES WHOLE OPERATION. SOME INDIVIDUAL COUNCILS HAVE PARALLEL ARMED UNITS WHICH ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR VIGILANCE AND DEFENSE. NUCLEUS FOR THESE UNITS PROBABLY IF PRP-BR, WHICH CONDUCTED ARMED OPERATIONS AGAINST FASCIST REGIME, AND HAS NOT TURNED IN ARMS. CRT CLAIMS TO BE ORGANIZED IN OVER 40 MILITARY UNITS AND OVER 50 FACTORIES AND BUSINESSES.

D. EFFECTIVENESS: CRT STATED OBJECTIVES (IN ASCENDING ORDER) INCLUDE:
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-- CREATION OF ARMED GROUPS TO GUARD AGAINST RIGHTIST COUNTERCOUPS.

-- PENETRATION AND EVENTUAL CONTROL OF MILITARY UNITS, FACTORIES, BUSINESSES, AND FARMS.

-- PROLETARIZATION OF ARMY.

-- BANNING OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND DISBANDING OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

-- ADOPTION OF CRT GOALS AT HIGHEST LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT (AFM ASSEMBLY, RC).

-- INSTITUTION OF DICTATORSHIP OF PROLETARIAT.

(1) OF THESE OBJECTIVES, CRT HAS ATTAINED LIMITED SUCCESS ON NUMBERS ONE AND TWO BUT HAS GOTTEN NOWHERE ON REST.

E. LINKS TO PARTIES: PRP-BR IS DRIVING FORCE BEHIND CRT'S. PRP-BR HAS BEEN GENERALLY UNSUCCESSFUL IN EFFORTS TO ENLIST OTHER PARTIES. PCP MEMBERS AND SOME LOCAL GROUPS GAVE INITIAL ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT TO CRT'S BUT WITHDREW THEIR BACKING EARLY ON. PS AND PARTIES TO ITS LEFT WERE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN CRT SECOND CONGRESS, BUT ALL REFUSED WITH EXCEPTION OF LUAR.

F. LEADERSHIP: PRP-BR LEADER CARLOS ANTUNES, MEMBER CRT NATIONAL SECRETARIAT, IS MOST ACTIVE CRT PUBLIC SUPPORTER. ISABEL DO CARMO, ALSO WITH PRP-BR, HAS BEEN VOCAL ADHERENT. OTHER INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED AS MEMBERS OF CRT SECRETARIAT INCLUDE: AIR FORCE CAPTAINS FREIRE AND SOBRAL COSTA E LUZ; ENLISTED MAN RODRIGUES; METAL WORKERS FERNANDO DE ALMEIDA

AND CRESPO; AND SILVA SANTOS.

G. CURRENT POLITICAL ROLE: AFM ASSEMBLY MAY 26 DECISION IN PRINCIPLE TO FAVOR CDR OVER CRT; SUBSEQUENT RC AND COPCON STATEMENTS ATTACKING CRT; AND JUNE 21 RC POLITICAL ACTION PLAN, WHICH AGAIN REJECTED DICTATORSHIP OF PROLETARIAT, HAVE TAKEN WIND OUT OF CRT SAILS, ALTHOUGH THEY NOW ATTEMPTING COMEBACK.

H. POLITICAL PROSPECTS: CRT INFLUENCE, LIMITED AS IT IS, DERIVES MORE FROM ATTENTION AFM HAS BEEN GRANTING THAN FROM DEMONSTRATED STRENGTH. HOWEVER, PRINCIPAL SYMPATHIZER WITHIN RC, GENERAL OTELO DE CARVALHO, HAS BEEN STOOD BACK (REF B). CRT'S LONGER-TERM FORTUNES ARE TIED TO DEGREE OF APPROVAL WHICH THEIR POLITICAL PROGRAM RECEIVES FROM RC, A MAJORITY OF WHOM, CLEARLY CONSIDERS CRT PROGRAM TOO EXTREME.

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3. WORKERS COMMISSIONS: WORKERS COMMISSIONS ARE ORGANIZED AT INDIVIDUAL COMPANY LEVEL AND ARE INDEPENDENT OF NORMAL UNION ORGANIZATION.

(A) MEMBERS OF WORKERS COMMISSIONS MAY OR MAY NOT BE UNION DELEGATES. FACTORY UNION DELEGATES AND WORKERS COMMISSIONS HAVE AT TIMES BEEN AT ODDS WITH COMMISSIONS, SOMETIMES DEFENDING MORE MILITANT POSITIONS. COMMUNIST-DOMINATED INTERSINDICAL HAS CALLED FOR DOWNPLAYING OF WORKERS COMMISSIONS AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO REGULAR UNION STRUCTURE, WHILE AT SAME TIME ATTEMPTING TO BRING WORKERS COMMISSION ACTIVITIES INTO INTERSINDICAL CHANNELS.

(B) TO SOME EXTENT WORKERS COMMISSIONS ARE PARALLEL ORGANIZATIONS TO LOCAL UNIONS. HOWEVER, WHILE UNIONS PROMOTE WORKERS INTERESTS (E.G. WAGES, HOURS), WORKERS COMMISSIONS SEEK TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF ENTERPRISES. IN MANY CASES COMMISSIONS HAVE EFFECTIVE VETO POWER OVER MANAGEMENT DECISIONS AND MUST

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APPROVE EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS. COMMISSIONS FREQUENTLY ARE FORMED IN RESPONSE TO THE IMMINENT CLOSING OF A COMPANY, TO A PROPOSED REDUCTION IN WORK FORCE, OR IN A NUMBER OF CASES, TO MANAGE A COMPANY AFTER ITS ABANDONMENT BY ITS OWNERS/DIRECTORS. INTERESTING SIDELIGHT IS THAT SOME COMPANY MANagements NEEDING BANK FINANCING FIND IT EXPEDIENT TO HAVE WORKERS COMMISSION MAKE LOAN APPLICATION SINCE STATE-RUN BANKS HAVE PROVIDED CREDIT MORE READILY UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

(C) AFM AND MINISTRY OF LABOR ACTIVELY SUPPORT FORMATION OF WORKERS COMMISSIONS. SOME ARE SUPPORTED BY ULTRA LEFT, E.G. UDP AND PRP-BR WHILE OTHERS ARE SUPPORTED -- LESS ENTHUSIASTICALLY -- BY PCP AND PS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PLACE CLEAR-CUT POLITICAL LABEL ON COMMISSIONS OVERALL AS MEMBERSHIP FREQUENTLY CHANGES AND MAY INCLUDE NON-POLITICAL ELEMENTS. COMMISSIONS, IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, NOW EXIST IN MOST COMPANIES THROUGHOUT PORTUGAL BUT ARE MORE COMMON IN INDUSTRIAL AREAS AROUND LISBON AND OPORTO.

4. AFM POSITION:

AS NOTED, AFM POSITION ON FORM WHICH "DIRECT LINKS WITH PEOPLE" WILL TAKE IS KEY TO FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR BOTH CRT'S AND CDR'S. SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL HAVE COMMENTED PUBLICLY IN GENERAL TERMS ON THE QUESTION OF DIRECT AFM LINKS WITH PEOPLE. TO DATE, HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO MORE PRECISE STATEMENT OF RC POSITION THAT THAT CONTAINED IN POLITICAL ACTION PLAN. CLOSEST TO IT WERE JUNE 28 COMMENTS BY AFM SPOKESMAN VASCO LOURENCO. VASCO LOURENCO REITERATED CENTRAL THEMES OF POLITICAL ACTION PLAN, ADDING THAT QUESTION OF MOST APPROPRIATE FORM AFM LINKS WITH PEOPLE WAS STILL UNDER STUDY. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT IMPORTANT THING WAS NOT THAT THE FORM SHOULD BE CRT OR CDR BUT RATHER THAT ORGANIZATIONS BE UNITARY IN STRUCTURE AND THAT THEY SUPPORT GOALS OF REVOLUTION.

INITIALLY, AT LEAST, AFM LINKS WITH ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD OCCUR AT LOCAL LEVEL. THESE ORGANIZATIONS WOULD COME TO INFLUENCE AND EVENTUALLY REPLACE LOCAL STRUCTURES. ONLY LATER WOULD IT BE NECESSARY TO DEVELOP AN ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK TO LINK THESE ORGANIZATIONS TOGETHER IN A COHERENT MANNER. THE IMPORTANT THING, HE CONCLUDED, WAS THAT LOCAL GROUPS NOT BE UNDER DOMINATION OF POLITICIAN

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PARTIES.

5. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

FINALLY, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THERE ARE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON WHICH THE AFM CAN SEEK TO BUILD, IN ORDER TO CREATE ITS "LINKS TO THE PEOPLE." ONE SUCH ORGANIZATION, WHICH HAS RECEIVED LITTLE ATTENTION, IS THE "TENANTS COMMISSIONS" WHICH, AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, IS A GROUPING OF HOUSE-DWELLERS FROM A CITY BOROUGH, ORGANIZED TO SUPPORT AND DEMAND BETTER MUNICIPAL SERVICES. OTHER INCHOATE CITIZENS' GROUPS ALSO EXIST ALONG THIS LINE.

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